



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE COLLEGE-ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS IN LATIN AND THE SCHOOLS: AN INVESTIGATION

BY CHARLES CHRISTOPHER MIEROW
Princeton University

Has the report of the Commission on College-Entrance Requirements in Latin (1909) justified itself? In view of the practical uniformity of college-entrance requirements in Latin that has been achieved in consequence of the adoption of that report by so many of our leading universities and colleges, this question must unhesitatingly be answered in the affirmative. This result of the Commission's activity surely marks a great step in advance.

But a further point naturally arises: What has been the effect upon the secondary-school curriculum? As it is now approximately five years since the adoption of the report, the time seems ripe for an investigation of this side of the question. In the hope of ascertaining exactly what results have been attained in the schools, the writer sent out on February 20, 1915, a questionnaire to one hundred private preparatory schools and some of the larger public high schools, mainly in the territory of the middle states. Seventy replies were received, forty-nine of which are from the private institutions. The questions to which an answer was requested are as follows:

I. Has there been a material change in the Latin course in your school since the publication of the report (1909)?

II. Do you devote the entire first year to the study of grammar and composition, or is the final term, or some part of it, spent in reading (apart from such selections for reading as are ordinarily contained in the beginners' book)?

III. Do you regard Caesar's *Gallic War* as the best subject-matter for the second year's work?

IV. Please state exactly what authors and works you are accustomed to read in the second, third, and fourth years of the Latin course, and to what extent you have adopted a permanent scheme.

V. If you have discontinued reading the traditional authors, will you please state whether you have been able to obtain suitable textbooks for use with your classes, and what new editions are, in your opinion, most needed.

VI. Do you continue the study of prose composition in the fourth year?

VII. Have you any further remarks or suggestions to make on this general topic?

TABLE I

	Material Change	Course Already in Accord with Report	No Change
Private schools	18	3	28
High schools	6	2	13

The general situation in the schools from which answers were returned may best be indicated by Table I.

The nature of the change varies somewhat with the individual school, as is, of course, to be expected. In most cases where the report has caused a change of curriculum teachers have availed themselves of the greater freedom of choice in subject-matter afforded by the new requirements; in others the change consists rather in the increased attention paid to sight reading; in some few it is to be feared that the only result has been concentration upon the reduced minimum requirement, with more abundant opportunities for review.

The answers to the third question: Do you regard Caesar's *Gallic War* as the best subject-matter for the second year's work? are of particular interest. Practically all the schools that have made no change in their curriculum naturally answer this query in the affirmative, but in addition all but twelve of the others are also in favor of the *Gallic War*. It may not be out of place to quote a few of the answers here:

"I have never found better material than Caesar's *Gallic War* for developing a knowledge of the structure and idiom of Latin."

"I believe it should furnish the backbone of the year's work, but there should be some easier reading first."

"Yes, for college preparation. For students who are not going to college I should prefer more variety."

"Yes. It takes a half-year of slow work on book I before my students (fourteen years) can do Caesar as well as they need to do it at the beginning of the first book. They learn more by this process than by better work in easier authors. The boy is better even if the text is not so good."

"Yes, but I believe, not in reading the first four books only, but in reading selections from the seven books."

"I do. It is the only work of continuous and sustained interest, and in the hands of a competent teacher, himself a lover of Caesar, the boys don't know a dull hour."

"Yes, after thirty years' use."

Table II is a summary of the information obtained in response to the fourth question, as regards the work of the second year. It

TABLE II

	Private Schools	High Schools
Caesar <i>B.G.</i> i-iv	14	9
Caesar <i>B.G.</i> i-iv+selections from Caesar or Nepos	18	4
Caesar <i>B.G.</i> three books+selections	4	
Caesar <i>B.G.</i> two books+selections	3	5
Equivalent of four books of Caesar in selections	10	3

will be observed that some schools are now reading selected episodes from the *Gallic War* rather than the traditional first four books. The inclusion of the last three, and notably of the charming seventh book with its thrilling account of the last stand of the Gauls at Alesia and the no less interesting narratives of the siege of Gergovia and the expedition against the Parisii, as material from which the required minimum amount may be selected, has done much to remove earlier objections to Caesar as an author lacking in interest. Certainly this year, when so many of Caesar's battlefields are the theater of new conflicts, no more entertaining and up-to-date classic than the *Gallic War* could well be found. But entirely apart from this abnormal and passing claim of the *Gallic War* to a place in the school curriculum, carefully selected episodes from Caesar's *Commentaries* will be found to possess a permanent charm and appeal that fairly entitle the work to retain its time-honored place as the first Latin classic to be placed in the hands of the beginner. Nepos is not a writer of great interest to a young student with little previous knowledge of history, and the irregularities of his style make him peculiarly unsuitable for study at so early a period in the course. It seems especially necessary in view of the fact that the translation set on the first college paper is at sight, that the first reading should be from an author whose syntax is perfectly regular. Only in this way can the basal principles of grammar be firmly fixed; the mere reading of Caesar serves as a constant review in syntax, while an

author like Nepos tends further to confuse and unsettle the usually none too clear impressions left by the beginners' book. It is undoubtedly this regularity of structure in combination with a comparatively concrete vocabulary that has led so many schools to retain the *Gallic War* as the backbone of the second year's work. Surely the fact is not to be attributed to any lack of suitable editions of other works from which a choice of reading-matter is allowed. In answer to the fifth question (which deals with this point), 38 private schools and 17 high schools expressed no need of new textbooks. It may be well, however, to quote a few of the answers from the minority:

"To my mind the greatest need in textbooks is for a properly graduated second-year text."

"We could use a reader containing selections from Livy, Tacitus, and Suetonius, as well as Caesar."

"In my opinion texts are needed with less copious notes and with some thought and care put on the vocabulary."

"I think *one book* is best for boys of the second year; hence a good book for the second year is needed."

"A better first-year book than any now in use, and a grammar explaining syntax from the point of view of the reader, not the writer of Latin, are most needed."

"I should prefer a graded reader for all the years, which should give a view of Roman history, life, and poetry to a certain extent. I should start with biography, continue into history and anecdotes, then to selected oratory and even simple philosophy, then to poetry, although I believe it quite feasible to mingle the last with prose reading from a very early date."

"We feel no need of new editions, because we use books that allow a rather wide choice between the parts of the authors which we believe most suitable for school use. Yet there would be a certain gain in collections of selections, especially for the second and third years. For one thing, the use of "ponies" could thus be lessened. The great objection to the use of such wider selections is the sight examination, with its demand of a particular vocabulary."

The point regarding the importance of carefully constructed vocabularies rather than copious notes seems particularly well taken.

Perhaps the greatest problem that the adoption of the report of the Commission has entailed is that of training boys and girls to read Latin at sight after only two years of study. In the endeavor to attain this end, many teachers will not unnaturally be tempted to hurry through the preliminary grammatical work in order to

begin reading in the first year. It was in order to discover if possible how widespread this tendency has become that the second question was framed: Do you devote the entire first year to the study of grammar and composition, or is the final term, or some part of it, spent in reading (apart from such selections for reading as are ordinarily contained in the beginners' book)? The answers received

TABLE III

	Private Schools	High Schools
Beginners' book only.	32	10
Additional reading.	17	11

may be tabulated as in Table III. It may be of interest also to note the amount and kind of reading done at some schools during the first year:

Bellum Helveticum, Caesar's first campaign = *B.G.* i. 1-29.

30 to 40 pages of *Fabulae Faciles*.

60 pages in Nutting's *Latin Reader*.

Second and third books of the Gallic War.

Practice in reading should, of course, be begun at an early period, and most beginners' books contain carefully graded fables, mythological or historical selections, or simplified passages from the *Gallic War*. These with the exercises in prose composition that frequently accompany them give ample scope for the application of grammatical principles and drill in forms, while the subject-matter is at the same time calculated to arouse interest. On the other hand, to devote an entire term of the first year to the reading of a book or two of Caesar in the effort to cover as much ground as possible is, to say the least, a method of doubtful expediency. Surely one year is all too short a time in which to obtain the necessary grammatical foundation that must precede any attempt to read intelligently with the use of vocabulary and notes—let alone ability to translate at sight. That difficult but all-important art needs to be carefully and systematically taught in connection with the prepared work of the second year (and those following). Above all, the student should obtain a feeling for the Latin word-order and method of expression from the practice of reading every sentence aloud in the original.

Daily memorizing of important words taken from the assigned text will form a natural basis for sight work in the same author. Absolute accuracy and careful precision, rather than the rapid—and therefore necessarily careless—perusal of many pages of Latin at sight, are, of course, to be constantly insisted upon.

TABLE IV

	Private Schools	High Schools
Answer, "Yes".....	35	14
Answer, "Yes, but for college entrance only".....	4	2
Answer, "No".....	10	5

The importance of prose composition as a means of drill in forms and syntax is still generally recognized, as will be at once apparent from the classification of answers to the question: Do you continue the study of prose composition in the fourth year? given in Table IV. Here are a few noteworthy replies:

"To every pupil—every day—in all classes."

"We pursue the study of prose with especial emphasis in the fourth year."

"For all who have not received college credit. I should be glad to have all take it, but the colleges generally set the bad example of discontinuing it."

"Yes, on the ground that this review of prose usage is necessary while poetry is being read, and that it is better to keep up grammatical study in this way than to spoil the study of poetry with it."

The third and fourth years of the school curriculum should naturally afford the best opportunity for freedom of choice in reading. The actual situation, as indicated in the replies to the fourth question, is shown in Tables V and VI.

The following examples will serve to show the nature and extent of the reading that is being done at some schools:

THIRD YEAR

Cicero: In *Catilinam* i and ii, selections from iii and iv; *Pompey*, *Archias*, *Marcellus*, *Ligarius*; selections from the Verres orations and *Philippics*;

Sallust: selections from *Catiline* and *Bellum Jugurthinum*.

Six orations of Cicero with Sallust's *Catiline*.

Cicero: selected letters, in *Catilinam* i and iv, *Pro lege Manilia*, *Pro Archia*, other orations at sight; Sallust: selections.

FOURTH YEAR

Vergil: *Aeneid* i, ii, and iv; Ovid: *Metamorphoses*, about 3,000 lines.

Vergil: *Aeneid* i-vi, selections from vii-ix.

Vergil: *Aeneid* i-v; Ovid: selections from *Metamorphoses*, about 800 lines.

Vergil: *Aeneid* i, ii, iv; iii at sight, *Eclogues*; Ovid: *Metamorphoses*, book i.

In general, the schools seem not to have taken advantage of the opportunity to read the *De senectute*, the *Georgics*, or the *Fasti* and *Tristia*.

TABLE V

THIRD YEAR

	Private Schools	High Schools
Four Catilines, <i>Archias</i> , and the <i>Manilian Law</i>	19	10
<i>Manilian Law</i> , <i>Archias</i> , and varied selections	28	8
<i>Manilian Law</i> , <i>Archias</i> , and sight only	2	3

TABLE VI

FOURTH YEAR

	Private Schools	High Schools
<i>Aeneid</i> i-vi	24	15
<i>Aeneid</i> i-vi with other selections added	8	
Prescribed minimum and varied selections	13	3
<i>Aeneid</i> , three or four books carefully, the rest at sight	4	3

Some of the comment elicited by the seventh question on the circular deserves to be set down here. The remarks are naturally quite varied in tone, but the following seem particularly worthy of consideration:

"The Latin department, engaged in the actual work of teaching, request me to recommend a return to the definite requirement in Caesar, Cicero, and Vergil. Their testimony is interesting, but personally I do not believe that so much time can be given to Latin unless a wider range of reading can be accomplished."

"The combination of (1) grammar, (2) composition exercises, and (3) regular textbook into one volume is a very great convenience (not to mention

the economy). We have such books for second- and third-year work used with good results. Should like to see a book for fourth-year work gotten out on a similar plan."

"In including Nepos in your sight translation passages you in effect make reading it mandatory; for it is so different in style from Caesar that any student who has read Caesar only will have considerable difficulty even with an easy piece of sight translation from Nepos."

"I think that the second-year examination paper should have a passage from a required author, or that there should be two sight passages for the candidate to choose between. It seems unfair to make a second-year candidate have his whole year's work in translation tested by one six-line passage only, and one which he has never seen before, while those of the third and fourth years have two required book passages and another at sight. The second year man is surely more inexperienced in translation, and yet he is given less show."

"The new requirements have been very helpful in teaching preparatory Latin. Under the old system the tendency was to fall into a rut on the part of the teacher, and on the part of the pupil to resort to literal translations. The extent of the prescribed reading left little time for sight work, which is one of the most interesting parts of the Latin curriculum. I am very enthusiastic over the change."

If one may be justified in generalizing from this small—though probably characteristic—set of replies, it would appear that surprisingly few schools have availed themselves to the full of the wider range of reading allowed by the Commission's report. Whether because of a settled conviction that the traditional authors are, after all, the best, or possibly in some cases through mere inertia, the majority seem still to read Caesar, Cicero, and Vergil in the time-honored selections. The work in Caesar, as we have seen, has been enlivened in some schools by the reading of selections from the seven books of the *Gallic War* instead of the first four books as formerly; Cicero's *Letters* and selections from Sallust's *Catiline* are in many cases being read in connection with the orations of Cicero, and, of course, much more attention is being paid to sight reading. However, in view of the still greater possibilities offered by the widespread adoption by the colleges of the report, it is somewhat of a disappointment that the schools have not more fully availed themselves of the opportunity for wider and more varied reading, especially in the last two years of the course. A few schools have, indeed, done so, and in closing it may be well to include as an indi-

cation of what may be done along this line several of the more unusual programs:

THREE HIGH-SCHOOL LATIN COURSES

(I)

SECOND YEAR

Caesar i-iv; selections from Bice's *Sight Reading in Latin*. Selections include other books of *Galic War*, *Civil War*; Eutropius; Aulus Gellius; Nepos, etc.

THIRD YEAR

In Catilinam i, iii, parts of ii and iv; *Manilian Law*; *Archias*; Sallust's *Catiline* and selections from Cicero's *Letters* for sight reading.

FOURTH YEAR

Aeneid i, ii, iv, v, vi; v read hurriedly; selections from last six books of *Aeneid* and occasional passages from Plautus, Terence, Horace, Catullus, Ovid, etc., as sight work—aim: to give some slight notion of Latin literature incidentally.

(II)

SECOND YEAR

Caesar *B.G.* i-ii; sight, 25 pages of Caesar *B.C.*; *B.G.* v-vii; Nepos.

THIRD YEAR

In Catilinam i and iii; *Archias*; *Manilian Law*; Sallust's *Catiline* xiv-lxi; Cicero's *Letters* and *De senectute*.

FOURTH YEAR

Aeneid i, ii, iv, vi; Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 500 lines; *Eclogues*; later books of *Aeneid*.

(III)

SECOND YEAR

Four and sometimes five books of Caesar.

THIRD YEAR

Six books of the *Aeneid*

FOURTH YEAR

First book of the *Odes* of Horace. In an advanced elective course in this year we read also Livy, books i, xxi, xxii, and a play of Terence merely to give experience in rapid reading. This course has been taken by eleven students as a maximum number.

SOME PRIVATE-SCHOOL COURSES

(I)

SECOND YEAR

Caesar *B.G.* ii, iii, iv, and selections from v–vii.

THIRD YEAR

Caesar *B.G.* i; Nepos, about 15 lives, with other selections for sight reading from Caesar's *Civil War*, Nepos, etc. We also start Vergil in the third year, reading about one book.

FOURTH YEAR

Aeneid i–v; Ovid: selections from *Metamorphoses* (about 800 lines).

FIFTH YEAR

Cicero: *Orations* (*Manilian Law*, *Archias*, selections from *In Catilinam* i–iv); Sallust's *Catiline*; Cicero's *Letters*, etc.

(II)

SECOND YEAR

Nepos' *Lives* (selections); books i and ii of Caesar's *Gallic War*, selections from books i, ii, iii of the *Civil War*.

THIRD YEAR

Cicero's *Orations*: i, iv, *in Catilinam*, *Archias*, *Manilian Law*; selections from *Letters* of Cicero; Sallust's *Life of Catiline*, and work on derivation.

FOURTH YEAR

Aeneid i, ii, iv, vi; *Eclogues* (complete), and about 1,000 lines of Ovid. There is sight reading in all classes. The schedule is permanent.

(III)

"The following is our normal course, though it varies somewhat from year to year, and our slow sections do not read the full amount."

SECOND YEAR

Caesar *B.G.* i, 1–29; iv–vi; Nepos, 10 lives; Ovid, 800–1,000 verses.

THIRD YEAR

Caesar *B.G.* vii or Sallust's *Catiline*; Cicero's Catilinarian speeches and those for the Manilian Law and for Archias, with selected letters or additional orations.

FOURTH YEAR

Aeneid i–vi. Sometimes we find time to add some selections from vii–xii or the *Bucolics*.